



## ***AOT in Action***

### ***TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!***

*Issue 132 – October 30, 2006*

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

#### **A Message from the Director:**

Good morning.

I would like to thank the Prescott Area Coalition for Tourism for inviting me to speak at their annual meeting last Thursday. It was wonderful to see so many community leaders in attendance, especially since the theme of the conference was partnerships, and the success of the tourism industry is based on the partnerships we all create. Prescott's industry has done an amazing job over the years in developing partnerships that enable them to take advantage of the many grant and technical assistance programs offered by AOT. I was also able to share some of AOT's new county level economic impact information, which paints a very robust picture of the importance of the travel industry in Yavapai County. Clearly, the programs and initiatives of the Prescott Area Coalition for Tourism are paying dividends for the community.

We are also pleased to announce that the 2007 Governor's Conference on Tourism will be held July 11-13 at the Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa. Please save the date for this premier industry event, which is presented by AOT, the Arizona Tourism Alliance, the Arizona Hospitality & Lodging Association and the Arizona Restaurant and Hospitality Association. We are working on an educational and dynamic conference program and will keep you up-to-date as new information is available.

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann  
Director  
Arizona Office of Tourism

# AOT News Flash

## AOT Presents “Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona” Workshop Series

Please mark your calendars for AOT’s newest workshop series, featuring information from the first full-scale “Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona” report. The economic impact workshops will be held at five locations throughout the state, with each presentation being tailored to the counties that are near that location. The Economic Impact of the Travel Industry in Arizona report features county level travel data on each of Arizona’s 15 counties, which will give communities invaluable information on the amount of spending and number of jobs tied to the travel industry in their area. This type of data is vital for communities to explain the value of the travel industry to key stakeholders and secure funding for tourism programs. The workshops will focus on providing communities with methods for using the valuable information in the report to achieve their objectives. Please see below workshop schedule for which counties will be reported at which workshop. To register for a workshop please contact Sarah Martins at [smartins@azot.gov](mailto:smartins@azot.gov) or by phone at 602-364-3687.

November 1, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Hilton Tucson El Conquistador Golf and Tennis Resort

10000 North Oracle Road

Tucson, AZ 85737

Counties to be covered: Pima, Cochise and Santa Cruz

November 8, 2006

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak Resort

7677 North 16th Street

Phoenix AZ 85020

Counties to be covered: Maricopa and Pinal

## AOT Conducts Native American Community Outreach Program

The 4th Annual AOT on the Road: Native American Tourism Community Outreach Workshop was held on Wednesday, October 25 at Wild Horse Pass on the Gila River Indian Community. Over 30 participants representing Tribal tourism, planning and economic development departments; Tribal museums and cultural centers; Tribal enterprises and university students attended the day long program that included roundtable discussions with AOT staff from the tourism education and development, advertising, research, travel industry marketing and media relations divisions. Attendees also heard presentations from Steve Geiogamah, tourism director for the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation who spoke about “Best Practices” for cultural tourism development and singer-songwriter/motivational speaker Vincent Craig who delighted the audience with his humorous perspective of tourism. Contact AOT Native American Tourism Development Manager Dawn Melvin for additional information at [dmelvin@azot.gov](mailto:dmelvin@azot.gov).

# Industry News

## Join the Club!

Want to be a part of Super Bowl XLII? The Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee Membership Club is your ticket to join the team! As a member of the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee Membership Club, you will receive official Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee merchandise, discounts and promotional offers from our community partners and the opportunity to win monthly raffle prizes including two (2) tickets to Super Bowl XLII. To find out more info and register online, visit [http://www.azsuperbowl.com/membership\\_club.aspx](http://www.azsuperbowl.com/membership_club.aspx).

## Airfares up 15% for Holiday

Thanksgiving 2006 is shaping up as an expensive, crowded holiday for air travelers. The average advance round-trip fare for Thanksgiving weekend travel has soared to \$434, up 15 percent from a year ago, according to an analysis by consulting firm Sabre Airline Solutions for USA Today. Higher fares aren't deterring travelers. Early bookings are 42 percent ahead of last year, Sabre says. That suggests travelers are booking earlier to nab a seat. (*Page 1A, USA Today*)

## TIA Names Bruce Bommarito as Vice President of International Planning

Bruce Bommarito has been named Vice President of International Planning for the Travel Industry Association (TIA). Bommarito will leave his current position as director of the Nevada Commission on Tourism on December 1 to join TIA. He currently serves on TIA's Board of Directors and chairs its International Strategic Planning Committee. Bommarito was appointed state tourism director for the Nevada Commission on Tourism (NCOT) in 2001, following a 28-year career managing hotels, resorts and casinos across the United States and serving on state and city tourism boards of directors. He was instrumental in obtaining for the Nevada Commission on Tourism the first license the Chinese government has ever granted to a U.S. tourism entity to advertise in China and in opening an office in Beijing.

## SuperShuttle Acquired by Veolia

Veolia Transportation North America, the largest operator of private passenger ground transportation in the U.S., has acquired SuperShuttle, the world's leader in airport shared-ride transportation. SuperShuttle has operations in 23 airports in the U.S. and 1,200 vehicles. It is the only national brand name in shared-ride ground transportation. Based in Paris, Veolia Transport serves more than 2.5 billion passengers each year. It operates 16,700 buses, 3,500 trains and has 72,000 employees worldwide in 25 countries, with total annual revenue of approximately \$5 billion. (*Special to Travel Advance*)

## International travel to the US seeing some rebounding signs

International travelers to the US from 2004 to 2005 increased by 20.3 percent, the largest two-year increase since 1996. But that figure was still below 2000 and 2001 levels, according to research from PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP. International travel, however, has been seeing some "robust" gains since 2003, the report said. The figures were seen as encouraging because US tourism representatives have been complaining about lower numbers of international visitors.

Some factors contributing to the apparent recovery in international travelers:

- Global economic performance has accelerated.
- The dollar remains weak relative to most currencies and is forecast to continue modest declines through next year, which will encourage increases in international travelers.
- The Department of Commerce has initiated marketing activities to increase awareness and develop a positive image of the US as a tourist destination. Campaigns in the last few years were started in both the United Kingdom and Japan.

International travelers to the US -- excluding Mexico and Canada -- in 2005 reached levels of 22 million, which represented 83.5 percent of the peak of 26 million in the year 2000. International guest rooms accounted for almost 13 percent of the total US lodging demand in 2000. That share declined to a low of 9.5 percent in 2003. But it rose to 10.3 percent in 2005, the report said. (*Travelmole.com 10/26/06*)